

County of Los Angeles – Department of Health Services
Public Health
2003
~Latino Health Issues – Fact Sheet~

Burden of Disease:

- For Latino adults in LA County, the leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs*), in rank order are: alcohol dependence, homicide/violence, depression, diabetes mellitus, osteoarthritis, motor vehicle crashes, coronary heart disease, drug overdose/other intoxication, stroke, cirrhosis. (LAC DHS, 2000)
 - * DALYs: are the sum of two components. 1) years of life lost (YLLs) measures the number of years lost when a person dies prematurely. Thus, the younger the age at which death occurs, the greater the number of YLLs due to premature mortality. 2) years lived with disability (YLDs) measures the number of years of healthy life lost due to temporary or permanent disability. Thus, the more severe or the longer the duration of disability associated with a given health condition, the greater the number of YLDs.
- 5 out of the 10 leading causes of disability-adjusted life years are chronic diseases directly related to lifestyle (physical activity and nutrition).
- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among Latinos in California and nationwide. (National Vital Statistics Report, 2000)

Overweight:

- Among children in LA County public schools in grades 5, 7 and 9, Latinos have the highest prevalence of overweight (25.2%), followed by Pacific Islanders (20.0%), African Americans (19.4%), Whites (13%) and Asians (11.9%).
- Overweight children face greater risk for type II diabetes, hypertension, high blood lipids, asthma, sleep apnea, chronic hypoxemia, early maturation, orthopedic problems, and psychosocial problems. (Surgeon General, 2001)
- According to the California Health Interview Survey, Latino adults in Los Angeles County have one of the highest rates of obesity (24.6%), surpassed only by African Americans (29.5%), and followed by Whites (16.6%) and Asians (5%).
- Persons who are obese are at risk of developing one or more serious medical conditions, which can cause poor health and premature death. Obesity is associated with more than 30 medical conditions including cancer, hypertension, heart disease, and type II diabetes. (American Obesity Association, 2002)
- Key causes of the obesity epidemic among Latinos in California include:
 - 62% of Latinos choose fast food when they eat out. (CDHS, 2002)
 - eating fast food is consistently associated with eating fewer fruits and vegetables (CDHS, 2002)
 - Latino adults in LA County have the highest rates of being sedentary (46%) than any other racial/ethnic group, even after controlling for the influence of education, income, age and gender. Asian/PI (41%), African American (40%), White (37%). (LAC Health Survey, 1999)

Acculturation:

- Hispanic groups are characterized by low socioeconomic status, but better than expected health and mortality outcomes (called the “Hispanic Paradox”). A closer look reveals

**County of Los Angeles – Department of Health Services
Public Health
2003**

~Latino Health Issues – Fact Sheet~

variations by age, gender, Hispanic subgroup, acculturation, country of birth, and cause of death. Possible under-reporting of Hispanic deaths, "salmon bias" and healthy migrant effects, and risk profile may contribute to, but do not explain, the paradox. The reasons for this paradox are likely to be multifactorial and social in origin. (Franzini L, et al 2001)

- Immigrants' risks of smoking, obesity, hypertension, and chronic conditions, although substantially lower than those for the US-born, increase with increasing length of US residence. (Singh GK, et al 2002)
- Studies suggest an increasing prevalence of psychiatric and substance use disorders among Hispanics that may be attributable to increasing levels of acculturation among the more than 5 million recent (1981-1995) immigrants from Latin America (Ortega AN, et al 2000)
- Substance use associated with increasing acculturation among U.S. Hispanics may have a strong impact on health services utilization. (Cherpitel CJ, et al 2002)
- Higher levels of acculturation to North American values and lifestyle in Mexican American childbearing women have been correlated with poor perinatal outcomes, including low birth weight. (Callister LC, et al, 2002)
- Mexican-descent women are at particular risk of late-stage breast cancer diagnosis by being the least likely of the major U.S. Hispanic subgroups to undergo breast cancer screening. (Borrayo EA, et al 2001)
- Foreign-born Latinos are less likely to be smokers than US-born Latinos, and those with 12 years or less of education have an increased odds of smoking. High acculturation is associated with more smoking in women and less smoking in men. (Perez-Stable EJ, et al 2001)

Cervical Cancer:

- Cervical cancer disproportionately affects Latinas living in Los Angeles County. The incidence rate is 24.4/100K (over two times higher than the national rate of 10.2/100K)
- Cervical cancer is a major problem for many women recently immigrating to California. (American Cancer Society, 2002)

HIV:

- Latinos living in Los Angeles County have the highest percentage of AIDS cases compared to other ethnic groups. In 2000, Latinos constituted 41.8% of all AIDS cases, compared to Whites (30.3%), African Americans (25.3%) and Asians (2.1%). (LAC AIDS Program)

Tobacco

- Latino youth (under age 18) in Los Angeles County have the highest proportion of exposures to second-hand smoke (55.3%) in the home, compared to Whites (23.1%), African Americans (13.4%) and Asians (7.1%). (LAC Tobacco Control Program)

Teen pregnancy

- The teen birth rate for Latinos is nearly four times the birth rate for non-Latino Whites teens in California. (CDHS 1995)

**County of Los Angeles – Department of Health Services
Public Health
2003**

~Latino Health Issues – Fact Sheet~

Access to health care

- In LA County, more Latinos reported difficulty accessing care (41%) than other racial groups (Asian/Pacific Islanders 22%, African-Americans 20%, Whites 17%) (LACHS, 1999).
- A higher prevalence of Latinos in LA County (18%) reported difficulty seeing a physician when needed due to money than other racial groups (African-Americans 14%, Asian/Pacific Islanders 11%, Whites 10%) (LACHS, 1999).
- Nearly one in three Latino children (29%) in Los Angeles County was uninsured in 1999-2000, more than three times the rate among those in other racial/ethnic groups. (L.A. Health, 2000)
- In LA County, among children who were non-citizens, including legal immigrants and those who are undocumented, 63% (or 160,000 children) did not have health insurance coverage in 1999-2000. (L.A. Health, 2000)
- In California, almost 1/3 of Latino children and 41% of nonelderly adult Latinos are uninsured, the majority of Mexican origin. There are 2.25 million uninsured Latino adults in California, roughly twice as many as any other group. (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2001)
- In California, only 43% of Latinos have job-based insurance, compared to 71% of non-Latino whites. (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2001)
- More than 1.5 million undocumented children and adults are uninsured and have no opportunities to obtain coverage through California's public programs. (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2001)
- In 1999, Latinos made up 26.5% of the uninsured nationwide. (The Urban Institute, 2001)
- In the United States, 70% of the agricultural-worker population does not have health insurance. (National Center for Farm-worker Health, 1999)

Diabetes:

- Latinos in LA County have higher prevalence rates of diabetes (11.1%) than all other ethnic groups (African Americans 9.6%), Whites (5.6%), Asian/PI (5.7%).
- The prevalence of diabetes among US-born and non-US-born Hispanics was 12.3% and 11.0%, respectively ($p=0.27$). The age-adjusted prevalence among English-speaking and Spanish-speaking Hispanics was 12.0% and 10.5%, respectively.
- Among non-US-born Hispanics, the age-adjusted prevalence of diabetes was lower among those who had lived in the US <10 years (3.1%) than those who had lived in the US 10-19 years (13.3%) or ≥ 20 years (11.1%).
- After controlling for sex, age, income, and health insurance coverage, non-US-born Hispanics who had lived in the US ≥ 10 years were 3.2 times more likely to have diabetes than non-US-born Hispanics who had lived in the US < 10 years, and Hispanics who were English-speaking were 1.7 times more likely to have diabetes than Hispanics who were Spanish-speaking.

**County of Los Angeles – Department of Health Services
Public Health
2003**

~Latino Health Issues – Fact Sheet~

Source: For diabetes statistics in this section: Paul Simon et.al., “Self-Reported Prevalence of Diabetes—Los Angeles, County, California, 1999” manuscript in process.

Breastfeeding:

- Latina mothers born in the United States were less likely to initiate breastfeeding (73%) than those not born in the U.S. (86%). U.S. born Latinas were also less likely to breastfeed at least six months (29%) than non-U.S. born Latinas (47%). (L.A. Health, 2001)
- Infants who are fed breast milk more than infant formula, or who are breastfed for longer periods, have a lower risk of being overweight during older childhood and adolescence. (Gillman MW, 2001)
- In LA County, the prevalence of mother's who reported breastfeeding at 6 months was 49.8% among Whites, 41.9% among Latinas, 24.5% among Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 23.1% among African-Americans.
- Among Latinas living in LA County, 48.5% of non-US-born Latinas reported breastfeeding at 6 months compared to 31.0% of US-born Latinas.

Source: For last two breastfeeding statistics in this section: Cheryl Wold, et.al., “Influence of Acculturation on Breastfeeding Practices among Latinas in Los Angeles County, California,” manuscript in process

Asthma

- Overall, the prevalence of asthma in LA County's child (0-17 years of age) population was 6.1%. Among Latinos, asthma prevalence was higher in those for whom the interview was conducted in English than in Spanish (6.4% vs. 2.8%, respectively).
- Among LA County Latinos, the risk of childhood asthma in Spanish-speaking households was less than one-half the risk for those from English-speaking households.
- Among children with asthma, 51.4% needed urgent medical services for their asthma in the past 12 months. This need for urgent medical care was higher in African-Americans and Latinos (68.2% and 63.6%, respectively) compared to Asian/Pacific Islanders and Whites (33.1% and 25.4%, respectively).

Source: For asthma statistics in this section: Paul Simon, et.al., “Prevalence of Childhood Asthma and Associated Morbidity in Los Angeles County: Impacts of Race/Ethnicity and Income,” manuscript submitted

Alcohol

- Among adults living in LA County who reported drinking in the past month, 40% of Latinos reported binge drinking (consuming 5 drinks or more on one occasion) one or more times in the past month compared to 25% of African-Americans, 23% of Whites, and 21% of Asian/Pacific Islanders (LACHS, 1999).
- The percentage of LA County residents reporting binge drinking was highest among Latino men (49%). (see LA Health – Alcohol Consumption and Abuse Among Los Angeles County Adults).

Tuberculosis:

**County of Los Angeles – Department of Health Services
Public Health
2003**

~Latino Health Issues – Fact Sheet~

- In 2000, 1,065 cases of TB were reported in Los Angeles County. Of these 72.7% were foreign-born TB cases. Three Countries account for 45.6% of these cases: 36.8 % from Mexico, 4.5 % from Guatemala, 4.3 % from El Salvador.
- There were 21 homeless cases of TB among foreign-born population reported in Los Angeles County in 2000, 91% of these cases were Latinos.
- In 2000, there were 48 confirmed cases of TB co-infected with HIV among foreign- born; 90% of these cases were Latinos.

Immunizations:

- Immunization levels for preschool age children (19-35 months) in Los Angeles County was 76.7% in 2001. (National Immunization Survey)
- Latinos have similar immunization levels as other LA County race/ethnic groups. However, the Healthy People 2010 goal is to achieve 90% coverage and there is still a long way to go to reach this goal in Los Angeles County for all races and ethnicities. (LAC Immunization Program)

Child Abuse:

- In 2000, 37% (13 out of 35) of fatal child abuse cases in Los Angeles County involved Latino youth.
- In 2002, 43% of all child abuse cases in LA County involved Latino youth.
- In 2002, 37.3% of children placed in foster care in LA County were Latinos.
- The child abuse hotline for the County is 800-540-4000. Open 24/7 with Spanish recording and staff. They are a resource to make reports or ask questions.

Source: For child abuse statistics in this section: LAC Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).